

## March 2014 – Surgery Newsletter



March is here and hopefully the recent stormy, wet and windy weather will finally be firmly in our past. I'm looking forward to be bit of spring weather as I'm sure you all are too!

One subject which seems to be building momentum in the newspapers as I write is the issue surrounding "Care.data". Although every household in the UK will be receiving a leaflet explaining all about this, I want to clarify what is happening. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, the Government is making it mandatory for GP surgeries to allow all patient's **anonymised** data to be automatically uploaded to the Health and Social Care Information Centre. This is for the purpose of helping the efficient running of the NHS by providing information about where resources are most required, but it also may get used for research purposes which can also include privately owned pharmaceutical companies. This government body will be in control of where this data goes and how it will be looked after into the future and it is completely out of our hands. You can opt out of your records being uploaded very easily, but you need to tell us. You can tell us in writing or just simply mention it to any member of staff on the phone or during a visit to the surgery. They will place a code on your record which stops your information ever being used in this way.

Don't forget that the Patient Participation Group meeting will be on the third Thursday of every month at 6.30pm in the Great Bentley Village Hall. The group needs new members and fresh ideas, so please come along on 20<sup>th</sup> March!

That's it for me for another month. I would now like to hand you over to this month's guest writer Di Woodward our Reception Manager.

### **Richard P Miller – Practice Manager**

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#### *"The myth of the fire breathing dragons"*

'Blood, sweat and tears' are normally associated with other jobs but also very apt for a doctor's receptionist whose working life is a very demanding one, which on occasion can also be a very messy one!

My team of nine dedicated and hardworking girls deal with up to 500 telephone calls during the working day - a lot of which are requesting urgent appointments. We do our best to accommodate all requests, but please do be "patient" with us as it can often be a real challenge. We do sometimes like to ask you questions about what's wrong in order to try to get you booked in with a clinician who can help you, but you do not have to give us details if you don't feel comfortable to. That said, it helps us to help you more often than not, so we will continue asking so I hope you all understand.

As well as the numerous phone calls we can also have 250-300 patients coming through our doors each day for pre-booked appointments. If you approach the desk and feel that we are ignoring you I apologise. We are instructed by the doctors to answer the phone ahead of patients who are in front of us, in case there is an emergency on the other end.

I am incredibly proud of the service the receptionists offer at Great Bentley and have never seen any "fire-breathing" come from any of them in my eleven years here. They always give their best to try and make the patient's contact with the surgery a pleasurable one and our regular positive surveys maintain this pride. If you ever feel that you have reason to disagree, please do contact me and I will be happy to listen to your comments.

### **Di Woodward - Reception Manager**